

# Heater Hopes Coaching Leads To Initial Rose Extravaganza

By Ken Halloy

OSU defensive backfield coach Chuck Heater is now involved in his 10th season of Big Ten football. During that time Heater, who played his collegiate ball at Michigan, has been a part of five Big Ten championships, either as a player or coach, but has never gone to a Rose Bowl.

"It's really hard to believe when you think about it. Five times. It doesn't seem right," said Heater, now in his third year at Ohio State. "Things just never fell into place. Maybe one day they will."

Buckeye fans will likely sympathize with Heater's most recent Pasadena disappointment, that coming last year when the Buckeyes tied Michigan for the conference crown but the Wolverines went West via their win over the Buckeyes.

Ironically, Heater was denied four times as a player for Michigan between 1971-74. The Wolverines played in the 1972 New Year's Day classic, but Heater did not make the trip, being a freshman. Freshmen did not make bowl trips at that time.

The Wolverines tied Ohio State for the Big Ten title the next three seasons, but again, each time wound up spending the holidays at home. A 14-11 Buckeye win in '72 gave the Buckeyes the bowl nod via the head-to-head tiebreaker rule.

It was during that season Heater, a tailback, began a career of consistency. He rushed for 655 yards, averaging 4.7 yards a carry, and scored four touchdowns. He also caught three passes for 31 yards.

The tiebreaker didn't do in the Wolves in '73; instead a vote by the conference's athletic directors did. A 10-10, season-ending tie had the conference bigwigs confounded, as both Michigan and OSU ended the season with 10-0-1 records. To decide the Rose Bowl participant, a vote was held and Ohio State received six of 10 ballots.

"Ohio State probably had the better team that season, but we were the better team that day," the Weston, W.Va., native recalls. As a junior that season, Heater gained 666 yards on the ground, an average of 5.8 yards a carry. He scored six TDs.

In 1974, Ohio State's 12-10 win again gave OSU the tiebreaker edge and sent the Buckeyes to Pasadena, denying Heater his last chance for Christmas in the sun. Instead, he spent his fourth straight holiday season at home in Tiffin, Ohio. Heater, converted to fullback, tacked on another 662 rushing yards and scored seven touchdowns that season.

Michigan posted a 30-2-1 record during the three years Heater was a starter.

Heater isn't bitter about the whole ordeal. He's a realist — an education psychology graduate who analyzes most things in terms of its Xs and Os.

"Going to the Rose Bowl just wasn't meant to be at that time. You can't dwell on it too much," said the second team All-Big Ten in 1973 honoree. "I just have to believe my time will come. You never stop believing."

He was drafted in the 10th round by New Orleans in 1975, but a pro career never materialized. "They were keeping six running backs, and I was the seventh," he said. Hamstring pulls and other nagging injuries hampered his progress at summer camp.

## Meet The Grid Coaches

Somewhat distraught, Heater turned down the opportunity to begin a pro career in Canada. Forever the realist, Heater resisted.

"I just didn't want to play football anymore. My heart wasn't in it. I knew it was time to give it up," he said. "Some guys never stop living those days of glory, and I knew I would always be a marginal player. Maybe I could have made it with the right team, but I would have been a marginal two or three-year player."

"It was just time to move on. I would say I was fortunate because some guys never move on."

Heater applied to graduate school, expecting to eventually land a career in counseling and psychology. He then ran into an old hometown friend, Jerry Janson, who was an assistant at Northern Arizona. Interestingly, Janson was a graduate assistant under Woody Hayes when Heater played for Michigan.

Putting reality on the back burner, Heater accepted when asked by Janson to become an assistant at NA.

"I was single at the time, so I could move very quickly. It was just a situation and I was available to do it," he explained. "Being a football coach was down on my list of things to do in my life. I didn't prepare myself as a player with the attitude of one day becoming a coach."

Heater never took coaching seriously, at least at first.

"I thought I would just have some fun for a while. I thought it might be something I knew a little bit about."

To his delight, coaching wasn't what he expected. "I had a very narrow view of what coaching was. I realized it was more than just teaching. As I got more involved I realized I had ability to be a coach and it had a lot to do with dealing with people. Communication was pivotal. And that's what I always wanted to do in my life — deal with people."

And so the career began.

After one season at Northern Arizona, Heater returned to Ohio when his backfield coach at Michigan, Chuck Stobart, who had now become head coach at Toledo, asked Heater to coach the running backs. Heater spent two years with the backfield before taking over the defensive backfield chores. He rebuilt the Rocket secondary in three years.

"I thought the opportunity to coach the secondary was a better career move for me professionally. If you do a good job there people will have a better chance to evaluate you," he explained.

Having established a name for himself in the coaching realm, Heater went to Wisconsin in 1982 when Dave McClain asked Heater to work with the defensive backfield there. Heater stayed there three years before coming to OSU. The Badgers defeated Ohio State twice during Heater's stay in Madison.

As the times have changed, so has Heater's coaching style.

"From a coaching standpoint, I've become more of a teacher than a yeller over the years," Heater said. "As a

young coach I was pretty radical in my approach. I was extremely aggressive, sometimes in the absence of knowledge.

"I can still yell and scream, but now I'm more interested in knowing why a kid doesn't do it right than I was at one time. Now I give the kid the opportunity to say, 'hey coach, this is what I saw on the play.'"

Heater even boasts about becoming a decent teacher.

"I think the whole key about teaching, like in anything, is to be able to get the whole picture, break it down into something simple," he said. "You do this so that when you try to communicate it, it comes across very progressive. When you cut away all the fat, you'll find that the simplistic form is the best."

That's usually easier said than done, especially for Heater. Though he minimizes his psychology training as "only an undergraduate degree," it's obvious his education has pervaded his coaching technique.

"That's what I like about coaching, it's more than just the Xs and Os. You spend a large portion of your time dealing with people," he said. "It gives me a sensitivity to understanding and



Chuck Heater

appreciating people more. That's what this job is all about, I've learned."

And it's that ability to communicate that makes Heater an effective coach, said OSU coach Earle Bruce.

"Coach Heater understands the kids and that's the number one key to being a coach," Bruce said. "You can teach all you want, but if you don't understand what makes a kid go, then you'll never make it as a coach. Coach Heater knows how to reach a kid. That's why he's a coach today at the Division I level."

And perhaps one day Heater will make it to Pasadena as a head coach. "That would be something, wouldn't it?" he laughed.

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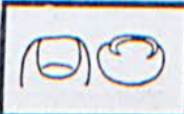


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## MICHIGAN MEMORIES: CHUCK STOBART

## Stobart Has Seen Both Sides Of Yearly War

By STEVE HELWAGEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

OSU offensive coordinator Chuck Stobart will be on the sidelines for the Ohio State-Michigan game for the 14th time Nov. 18 when the Buckeyes host the Wolverines at Ohio Stadium.

The 62-year-old Stobart spent eight seasons as offensive coordinator at Michigan under Bo Schembechler from 1969-76. Then, after making six other coaching stops, the Ohio U. graduate returned to his home state and the Big Ten as OSU's wide receivers coach in 1995.

"I remember back, 30 years ago, we thought that was the biggest game in college football," Stobart told BSB. "I was excited about coming back to Ohio State to see if that feeling was still there.

"I had been at Pitt, where the Pitt-Penn State game is big, at Arizona, where you had the Arizona-Arizona State game, at Utah, where you had Utah-BYU, and at USC, where you had Southern Cal-Notre Dame and USC-UCLA.

"But I have to tell you, this is the biggest college football game there is."

Stobart's teams are 4-8-1 in The Game, including a record of 3-4-1 while he was at Michigan and 1-4 since he's been at OSU.

"One of the things that has always struck me about this game is it is a tough, physical, hard-nosed game but clearly played between two teams who respect each other immensely," Stobart said.

Since he has seen this rivalry from both sides, Stobart was asked about how fans in Michigan view The Game.

"I think for a lot of the fans in Michigan, the Michigan State game is important," Stobart said. "I say that because the first year we were there at Michigan in '69, we lost to Michigan State but we beat Ohio State in probably one of the greatest games ever played.

"We went around that spring to all of the alumni events and all you ever heard, 'Now, you do know Michigan State is important,

and it is.

"But I tell you one thing, it's still not like Michigan and Ohio State. I don't care what anybody says."

## The Michigan Years

Stobart had hooked up with a Woody Hayes disciple named Bo Schembechler when he was hired as the quarterbacks coach at Miami (Ohio) in 1967. Two years later, Schembechler took Stobart with him to Michigan as the offensive coordinator.

That fall in 1969 would be the first of 10 meetings between Schembechler's Wolverines and Hayes' Buckeyes, a period gridiron historians note as "The Ten Year War."

Stobart was around for the first seven match-ups before he left in 1977 to become the head coach at Toledo.

The first meeting between teacher and pupil was a dandy in 1969, as the Buckeyes ventured to Ann Arbor as the nation's No. 1-ranked team with a 22-game winning streak. OSU had averaged 46 points and 512 yards a game.

Going in as a 17-point favorite, OSU needed just a win to secure at least a piece of its second straight national championship. Due to the "no-repeat rule," though, the Buckeyes were precluded from returning to the Rose Bowl.

Michigan, playing before a record crowd of 103,588, pulled off the stunning 24-12 upset. The key play was a 60-yard punt return by UM's Barry Pierson, setting up a 2-yard touchdown run by quarterback Don Moorhead that gave the Wolverines a 21-12 lead.

"I'm sure Bo was fired up for that game, as I'm sure Woody was," Stobart said. "That game was like the ones I've seen the last three or four years — two teams playing hard and there will be three or four breaks that happen during the course of the game that turn those games around.

"Ohio State played extremely well that day, but we did, too. We (Michigan) got an interception and returned it down to the 3-



JEFF BRIDGMAN

BEEN THROUGH THE WARS — Ohio State offensive coordinator Chuck Stobart will mark his 14th OSU-Michigan game this year. Stobart has spent time on both sidelines during the series, serving as an assistant coach for both schools.

yard line. From then on, it was kind of hang on and make them try and beat you."

A year later, OSU exacted its revenge by winning 20-9 in Ohio Stadium to wrap up a perfect regular season and advance to the Rose Bowl to face Stanford.

OSU went into a tailspin in 1971, falling to 6-4. But the Buckeyes gave an unbeaten Michigan team quite a tussle. Tom Campana's 85-yard punt return had given OSU a 7-3 lead. But Michigan, which already had the Rose Bowl berth sewn up, finished a perfect regular season by driving for the winning score, which came on Billy Taylor's 21-yard run.

"We were undefeated and they were really struggling that year," Stobart said. "That was a game where we had to put together a big drive at the end of the game to win."

Perhaps the four best years in the OSU-Michigan rivalry came between 1972-75. Each time The Game matched top-10 teams, including top-five opponents the last

## Stobart In The Game

As Assistant Coach:  
Won 4, Lost 8, Tied 1

At Michigan: Won 3, Lost 4, Tied 1  
1969 — Michigan 24, Ohio State 12  
1970 — Ohio State 20, Michigan 9  
1971 — Michigan 10, Ohio State 7  
1972 — Ohio State 14, Michigan 11  
1973 — Ohio State 10, Michigan 10  
1974 — Ohio State 12, Michigan 10  
1975 — Ohio State 21, Michigan 14  
1976 — Michigan 22, Ohio State 0

At Ohio State: Won 1, Lost 4  
1995 — Michigan 31, Ohio State 23  
1996 — Michigan 13, Ohio State 9  
1997 — Michigan 20, Ohio State 14  
1998 — Ohio State 31, Michigan 16  
1999 — Michigan 24, Ohio State 17

three years, and each time the Rose Bowl was at stake.

"Those were the field goal years because the games usually were so close they came down to a kick at the end," Stobart said. "That was a big period because I think both teams were really good. They were both talented, well-coached football teams."

Ohio State won the 1972 game in Columbus 14-11 behind a pair of stunning goal-line stands. Each time, Schembechler eschewed short field goals — kicks that could have ultimately tied the game and sent his team to Pasadena — before losing possession on fourth-and-goal at the OSU 1-yard line.

Michigan ran 12 plays inside the OSU 6 but netted just one touchdown.

"If I remember right, those were early in the game," Stobart said. "You just think you're going to score. You just think there's no way you're not going to get the next one in."

"A little bit of thinking, too, is you feel you'll need more than just a field goal there to win the game."

Each team was unbeaten when it took the field for The Game in 1973, and they stayed that way after a 10-10 tie. Michigan's Mike Lantry missed field goals of 40 and 29 yards in the final two minutes that could have again sent UM to Pasadena.

Since the "no-repeat rule" had been abolished prior to the 1972 season, the decision on which team would represent the Big Ten



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**MICHIGAN MEMORIES: CHUCK STOBART**

at the Rose Bowl was left up to a vote by the Big Ten's athletic directors.

As it turned out, the ADs voted to send Ohio State to the Rose Bowl, even though the Buckeyes had been to Pasadena just the year before. An injury to UM quarterback Dennis Franklin, who suffered a broken collarbone against OSU, may have swayed the voting. According to Stobart, that did not appease Schembechler.

"I don't think he was real pleased with that vote," Stobart said. "I do think, though, if you go back and check it out, that might have been one thing that changed college football in terms of opening up the bowls to more than one (Big Ten) team."

Sure enough, the rule limiting the Big Ten to one bowl team was lifted by 1975, when Michigan ventured to the Orange Bowl despite losing another season-ending showdown to the Buckeyes.

"I know there was a string there where the record for the players at Michigan was like 30-2-1 (in 1972-74) and they had never gone to a bowl game," Stobart said.

The kickers again figured heavily in the outcome in 1974 in Columbus as Tom Klaban's field goals of 47, 25, 43 and 45 yards lifted OSU to a 12-10 win and another Rose Bowl berth. Lantry's potential game winner from 33 yards out with 18 seconds left was wide left.

A year later, another Michigan miscue again spelled victory for the Buckeyes, this time in Ann Arbor. Fullback Pete Johnson had scored on a 7-yard pass from Cornelius Greene and on a 1-yard run, which tied the game at 14 with 3:18 left.

The pressure was squarely on Michigan — a tie would send OSU to the Rose Bowl because Michigan had been tied by Stanford and Baylor earlier in the season.

Facing third-and-19 on his own 11-yard line, UM freshman quarterback Rick Leach saw his pass intercepted by OSU's Ray Griffin at the Michigan 32. Griffin, the younger brother of OSU Heisman Trophy winner Archie Griffin, returned it all the way down to the UM 3. Johnson did the rest and the Buckeyes, after a 21-14 win, were Pasadena-bound.

"That was an interception deep in our end," Stobart said. "Rick Leach, a freshman, threw the interception, and most of these games are determined by plays like that. You make a mistake and the other team capitalizes, and there goes the ball game."

Schembechler and Stobart earned their first victory at Ohio Stadium in 1976 as the Wolverines blanked the Buckeyes 22-0. After a five-year hiatus, UM headed back to the Rose Bowl — and Stobart, not long after, was on his way to Toledo.

**The Ohio State Years**

OSU coach John Cooper was looking for stability on his coaching staff and he found it when he hired Stobart, who had just finished up a six-year run as the head coach at Memphis, as his new receivers coach.

Stobart's first season at OSU in 1995 turned out to be a magical one as the Buckeyes won their first 11 games to move as high as No. 2 in the national polls. But the season-ending game at Michigan, just 6-3 on the year, loomed and OSU needed a win to keep Northwestern, already in the clubhouse with an 8-0 Big Ten mark, from going to the Rose Bowl.

Stoking the fires were comments by Stobart's star pupil and eventual Fred Biletnikoff Award winner, flanker Terry Glenn.

"I guarantee we're going to the Rose Bowl," Glenn said. "I think we should keep Michigan down here where they belong like the rest of the teams and go up there and kick their butts like we did everybody else."

"I think the year we went up there and lost 28-0 (in 1993), I think a lot of people put Michigan up on a pedestal. I think the attitude is now that we can beat Michigan."

"Michigan is nobody," he said.

But on game day, the Wolverines took it to Ohio State. Tailback Tim Biakabutuka reeled off an OSU opponent-record 313 yards on 37 carries and freshman cornerback Charles Woodson intercepted two Bobby Hoving passes in a 31-23 win over the Buckeyes. Glenn caught four passes for 72 yards but was not a major factor.

"He had had such a great year," Stobart said. "Obviously, you don't like to see (comments like) that. When I talked to him about that, it was almost like one of those deals where what he was trying to say was, 'We go against good defensive backs every day in practice, so (playing Michigan) is not a big deal.'"

"Unfortunately, it doesn't come out like that on the other side."

OSU was again unbeaten a year later and had already locked up a Rose Bowl bid. But the Wolverines, just 7-3 coming in this time around, sneaked into the Horseshoe and upset the No. 2-ranked Buckeyes 13-9.

Another one of Stobart's receivers was on the firing line in 1997, when OSU ventured north to take on the No. 1-ranked Wolverines.

This time, sophomore David Boston took it upon himself to call out Woodson, who was only a few weeks away from bringing the Heisman Trophy home to Ann Arbor.

"He's a great athlete, everybody knows,"

said Boston, who intimated that Woodson was not the best corner he had faced. "He's come on ESPN and USA Today and said he is the best college football player ever, and just dah-tah-dah-tah-dah."

Woodson helped hold Boston to three catches for 68 yards — although one of them was a 56-yard TD against Woodson — in a 20-14 win that denied OSU a piece of the Big Ten title and a Rose Bowl berth.

A year later, with Woodson now in the NFL, Boston gained his revenge on Michigan. He caught 10 passes for 217 yards, including touchdowns of 30 and 43 yards from quarterback Joe Germaine, in a 31-16 win over the Wolverines.

An earlier loss to Michigan State had cost OSU its No. 1 ranking and, ultimately, the Rose Bowl berth. But the Buckeyes went on to finish 11-1 and ranked No. 2 nationally after a Sugar Bowl win over Texas A&M.

"David did not have a good game in the game we had lost to Michigan State down here that year," Stobart said. "But he did come back and played well at Iowa and played well against Michigan and then against Texas A&M in the Sugar Bowl."

"I was happy for him because of that. The year before he had taken a lot of heat for what he had said. He had to live with that. I was happy when he was able to come back from that and have a big game for us."

"That happens on both sides of the ball. I remember up there when they said some things that hit the locker room down here with Woody. You have to be careful what you say because we are so close to them."

There was little controversy last year as Ohio State, playing out the string in a 6-6 season, gave Michigan a real challenge before late miscues proved costly in a 24-17 defeat.

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